

**Remarks/Arguments**

Claims 2-13 are pending.

Claims 2-13 stand rejected.

Claims 2, 6 and 10 have been amended.

Claims 14, 15 and 16 have been added.

Claims 2-16 are presented for consideration on the merits.

No new matter has been added.

Claims 2 and 10 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 102 as being anticipated by Asai (U.S. Pat. Num. 5,402,414). The other independent claim, Claim 6, was rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103 as being obvious over Asai in view of Huscroft (U.S. Pat. Num. 6,188,692). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's reasons for the rejections, for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to an optical communication system for transmitting optical signals over a plurality of first optical transmission lines to a plurality of third optical transmission lines via a second optical transmission line. Among other elements, the independent claims of the present invention include the feature that the optional information, which is stored in a region previously defined for storing the optional information in an overhead, is extracted and then entered into a different region which is not defined to store the optional information in the overhead, and then transmitted. When the data is received, the optional information stored in a different region in the overhead is extracted and then entered into a region previously defined for storing the optional information, and then transmitted.

On the other hand, *in Asai ('414), the portions indicated by the Examiner only disclose that the Z2 byte is extracted, and the Z2 byte is stored in the overhead again.*

The Z2 byte for extension, in Asai, is used for controlling the E1 and E2 bytes for the orderwire (See col. 5, lines 3-8; col. 8, lines 46-51). For example, a calling number for a transmission equipment for setting up a line connection is set in Z2 byte. When the Z2 byte is not a calling number for the transmission equipment, the E2 byte is passed through. When the Z2 byte is a calling number for the transmission equipment, the transmission equipment receives the E2 byte and sets up a line connection.

In Asai, the Z2 byte is used to notify whether line connection of the orderwire should be set up or not. Further, as described in col. 9, lines 46-54, the E2 byte is used for transmitting only sound signal and a communication data, but does not include a signal for controlling. In the Z2 byte, a calling number is set as 8 bit data. Thus, according to Asai, the content of the E2 byte and the content of the Z2 byte are not interchanged as is the case of the first, second and third information in the present invention.

There is no disclosure concerning the arts of extracting the information from a region previously defined for storing the information in an overhead and then entering it into a different region which is not defined for storing the optional information, and extracting the information from the different region which is not defined for storing the information and entering it into a region previously defined for storing the information.

As such, there is no teachings or suggestions in the prior art, either alone with respect to claims 2 and 10, or when combined with one another with respect to claim 6, that disclose all of the elements of the present invention. For example, there is no

teaching or suggestion for first and third regions of the first and third overheads that are predetermined for storing optional information in their respective overheads via second region in a second overhead that is not defined for a particular use.

Applicants request that the rejection of independent claims 2, 6 and 10 be withdrawn. Claims 3-5, 7-9, and 11-16 depend from claims 2, 6, and 10, and thus these claims should be allowed for the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 2-16 are in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application he is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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